

### *Project Will Mean Economic Growth for Johnson County*

(Cleburne) –U.S. Representative Chet Edwards today joined Johnson County leaders and officials from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) and the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) to break ground on the beginning of two projects at U.S. 67 and the future SH 121/Chisholm Trail funded by \$31 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The projects will begin just east of SH 174 and end at BUS U.S. 67.

The following are Edwards' remarks as prepared for delivery:

“Mrs. Chavez, I want to begin by thanking you for your dedicated leadership for TxDOT and for the future of North Central Texas. Your service, along with the distinguished military service of your husband, personify the best of public service, and it is a privilege to work with you. Representative Orr, Judge Harmon, Commissioners Rick Bailey and John Matthews, Mayor Reynolds, Commissioner Meadows, Mr. Vandergriff and distinguished guests:

This is a great day for Cleburne and for the future of Johnson County families and businesses. Not only are we improving highway 67 and making it safer, we are laying the foundation for the future of the Chisholm Trail. I can think of few projects in this decade that will be more

important to the future of Johnson County than the building of the 121/Chisholm Trail highway.

It's about a lot more than pavement and roads. This project will mean economic growth and more jobs for Johnson County. It will mean more time with family and less time stuck in traffic. And, less traffic congestion will mean cleaner air and lives saved, and you cannot put a dollar value on that. The Economic Recovery Act, passed by Congress last year, provided \$31 million for this project. This is exactly what the Recovery Act should be about—creating jobs today to build projects that will improve our lives and economy for decades to come.

In addition, the Recovery Act provided over \$117 million for improvements in Tarrant County at I-20/SH 183. Together, the Johnson and Tarrant County projects represent a key step forward in the building of the Southwest Parkway/Chisholm Trail project. All of this would not have happened had it not been for an incredible partnership between the state-federal-local, county and regional governments. To all those along the way I may have pestered, cajoled and pleaded with, thank you and congratulations for your good work.

In a day of widespread partisanship and political bickering, this project shows how government should work—people of good faith working hard together to improve the lives of our fellow citizens. The federal government may have provided the funds for this project, but we would not be here today were it not for the hard work of TXDOT, NTTA, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and the state, county and city leadership.

This is truly what public service should be all about, and I salute everyone here for making a difference for the families and businesses of Johnson County.”

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